

**REMARKS**

Claims 87-124, 126-136, 138-171 and 173 remain pending after amendment.

**Claim Amendments**

By this amendment, claims 125 and 137 are cancelled and the limitations thereof incorporated into claims 124 and 136, respectively. Claim 172 is cancelled and the limitations thereof incorporated into claim 169. Various editorial revisions are also made in certain of the pending claims. No new matter is added by this amendment.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter of claims 125-135, 137-140, and 145-168.

**Rejection under 35 USC 112 (paragraph two)**

Claims 126-135, 141, and 145-151 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 (paragraph two) as not distinctly claiming the invention.

This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, the claims are amended in a manner which is believed to overcome the rejection of the Examiner. The rejection is thus believed moot and should be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 124, 136 and 141-144 under 35 USC 103(a)**

Claims 124, 136 and 141-144 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grandprey et al or Goebel et al in view of Japan 2001-104997. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, the limitations of allowed claim 125 have been incorporated into claim 124. The limitations of allowed claim 137 have been incorporated into claim 136.

Accordingly, all rejected claims are now believed to define patentable subject matter and the rejection should be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 169-172 under 35 USC 103(a)**

Claims 169-172 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grandprey et al or Goebel et al in view of either Lahti or Cole. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, claim 169 is amended to recite the limitations of cancelled claim 172. Claim 169 now state that the polluted water flowing out of the pH controller has a pH value of 3 to 6. Such an

Application No. 10/031,084

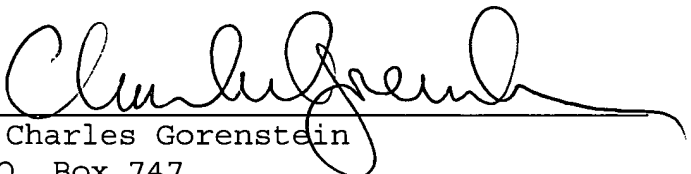
embodiment is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited prior art. The rejection is thus improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By   
Charles Gorenstein  
P.O. Box 747  
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747  
(703) 205-8000

CG/JWH/sh  
2936-0146P